

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7764

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN-PRC RELATIONS: OPPOSITION TO PEACE TREATY

STILL ALIVE

REF: TOKYO 1033

SUMMARY: NEW OPPOSITION WITHIN LDP TO PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH PRC HAS SURFACED. OBJECTION NOW IS TO USE OF WORD "PEACE" IN TITLE ON GROUNDS THAT PEACE NEGOTIATIONS ALREADY CONCLUDED WITH NATIONALISTS IN 1952. GOJ REFUSES TO DELETE WORD FROM TITLE. WHILE BUREAUCRATS CAUTIOUS ABOUT ASSESSING STRENGTH OF NEW LINE, WE LOOK AT IT AS HARRASSMENT RATHER THAN REAL THREAT TO PROSPECTS FOR TREATY. GOJ ON NOTICE, HOWEVER, THAT OPPOSITION TO TREATY STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. OPPOSITION WITHIN LDP TO CONCLUSION OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH PEKING HAS SURFACED IN NEW FORM. PRO-TAIWAN ELEMENTS IN DIET NOW ARGUE THAT WORD "PEACE" SHOULD BE DROPPED FROM TITLE OF TREATY SINCE PEACE ALREADY CONFIDENTIAL

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NEGOTIATED WITH NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT IN 1952. USE OF

WORD IN TITLE OF NEW TREATY SUGGESTS OLD PACT BEING SCRAPPED. CONCLUSION OF SUCH A TREATY WOULD REPRESENT "THIRD BLOW" TO TAIPEI (1972 COMMUNIQUE AND CIVAIR PACT BEING THE OTHERS) AND ONE WHICH WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR NATIONALISTS TO ABSORB.

2. NEW ARGUMENT FIRST APPEARED LAST WEEK AT MEETINGS OF LDP FOREIGN POLICY COMMITTEE AND WAS PUSHED IN INFORMAL EVENING SESSIONS WITH FONOFF OFFICIALS. MAIN ADVOCATES HAVE BEEN YOUNGER SEIRANKEI MEMBERS WHO OBJECTED SO VOCIFEROUSLY LAST YEAR TO CONCLUSION OF CIVAIR PACT. OLDER CONSERVATIVES, LIKE FORMER PRIME MINISTER KIISHI HAVE REMAINED SILENT BUT LENT WEIGHT OF THEIR PRESENCE TO SOME MEETINGS. ISSUE RAISED IN DIET JAN 30.

3. GOVERNMENT HAS MAINTAINED IN MEETINGS AT ALL LEVELS THAT USER OF TERM "PEACE" IN TITLE OF TREATY DESIGNED TO DESCRIBE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP RATHER THAN ANY FORMAL OR JURIDICIAL END TO PAST HOSTILITIES. BECAUSE PAST HISTORY OF SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS HAS BEEN MARRED BY WAR, HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO EXPRESS JAPAN'S LACK OF AGGRESSIVE INTENT TOWARD CHINA IN THE MOST FORTHRIGHT POSSIBLE MANNER. BUREAUCRATS HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT FOCUS OF CHINESE INTEREST IN TREATY IS ON "FRIENDSHIP", AND THAT RECENT HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS WITH PRC REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING VICE FON MIN HAN NIEN-LUNG AND AMBASSADOR CHEN CONFIRM THIS. PRIME MINISTER MIKI, FULLY BRIEFED IN ADVANCE BY FOREIGN OFFICE, ANSWERED JAN 30 DIET INTERPELLATION WITH FIRM REFUSAL TO DELETE WORD "PEACE" FROM TREATY TITLE.

4. COMMENT: OUR SOURCES (CHINA DIVISION'S OGURA AND NEW PLANNING DIV DIR MATANO) ARE NOT SURE HOW STRONG OR SINCERE NEW LINE OF OPPOSITION IS. BOTH CITE VEHEMENCE OF INITIAL ATTACKS -- ONE LDP FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL SESSION WAS UNABLE TO MOVE ON TO OTHER BUSINESS BECAUSE TREATY OPPONENTS MONOPOLIZED MEETING -- BUT WANT TO WAIT BEFORE ASSESSING PRECISELY HOW TROUBLESOME NEW ARGUMENT MAY PROVE. OUR INITIAL ASSESSMENT IS THAT NEW LINE IS FALLBACK NOW ADOPTED BY OPPONENTS TO TREATY WHO HAVE SEEN PREVIOUS POSITIONS DESTROYED BY RECENT EVENTS. OPPOSITION
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ARGUMENT THAT TREATY WOULD HAVE TO WAIT RESTORATION OF TAIWAN AIRLINK UNDERCUT BY NORI VISIT TO PEKING. AT SAME TIME, LACK OF RESULTS OF MIYAZAWA TRIP TO MOSCOW MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR OTHERS TO MAINTAIN POSITION THAT JAPAN SHOULD MAINTAIN "EQUIDISTANCE" IN DEVELOPING RELATIONS WITH BOTH PRC AND USSR.

5. FONOFF OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY OLDTIMERS IN CHINA

DIVISION LIKE OGURA, ARE STILL GUNSHY FROM LAST YEARS
BATTLES OVER CIVAIR AGREEMENT. WHILE THEIR PRUDENCE IS
WELL-PLACED, THE NEW OPPOSITION LINE AT THIS POINT LOOKS
MUCH MORE LIKE A HARRASSMENT THAN A REAL THREAT TO THE
TREATY UNDER NEGOTIATIONS. IT SERVES AS A WARNING,
HOWEVER, THAT ANY MISSTEP IN THE NEGOTIATION
PROCESS WILL BE POUNCED UPON BY OPPONENTS WHO ARE STILL
VERY MUCH ALIVE, IF NOT WELL-ARMED WITH ARGUMENTS.

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